

years in public life I have rarely met anybody that I thought had the particular blend of strengths that Prime Minister Chretien has, a man who cares passionately about ordinary people and the problems that they face and is also terrifically engaged in the great intellectual challenges that governing in this new time presents and that has the practical sense to build the bridges between the great challenges of the time and the ordinary concerns of real citizens. He is a very, very good leader for this time, and

I am very glad to have him as our partner in trying to build our dreams for the 21st century. Prime Minister.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:56 a.m. in the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Canada. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Jean Chretien; Canadian Ambassador to the United States Raymond Chretien; U.S. Ambassador to Canada James J. Blanchard; and Shirley Thomson, director, National Gallery of Canada.

## Exchange With Reporters in Ottawa February 24, 1995

*Secretary of State Christopher*

Q. Mr. President, how did you find Secretary Christopher?

*The President.* He was doing well this morning. I had a great talk with him. And he feels good, and he's going to go home with us this afternoon.

Q. Will he be able to get back to work soon?

*The President.* I'm encouraged.

Q. Would it affect the Mideast trip at all, sir?

Q. [*Inaudible*—that's what gave him the ulcer? [*Laughter*]

*The President.* Gee, I hope not. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:30 a.m. at the Parliament. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada in Ottawa February 24, 1995

*Prime Minister Chretien.* Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes a great meeting between the President of the United States and myself, members of his Cabinet, and members of my Cabinet. As I had the occasion to say many times, the relations between our two countries is an example to the world. We have some problems, but we are able to work on them and find solutions.

I'm delighted, Mr. President, that the Canadians appreciate very much the relations between Canada and the United States at this moment. It was some years ago only 25 percent were happy with the quality of our relations. Now 53 percent are happy. So it's probably more because of you than of me, but—[*laughter*—I just want to say to you that it's been, for my wife and I, a great occasion to receive

your wife and you. And the bond between our two nations, I'm sure, are better because you came here.

[*At this point, the Prime Minister spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.*]

It is always for us a great pleasure to welcome our neighbors to the south. We share a continent. We share history. If there have been difficulties between the United States and Canada a century and a half ago, today we are able to sit down together and to find solutions that bring about a better understanding between two neighbors where mutual respect resides and neighbors who understand that it is in working together that we can go forward.